


FLORIDA HIGHWAY PATROL

POLICY MANUAL

	SUBJECT TRAFFIC DIRECTION AND CONTROL	POLICY NUMBER 17.17
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17.17.01 PURPOSE

To provide uniform guidelines for the directing and controlling of traffic.

17.17.02 AUTHORITY

Section 321.05, Florida Statutes
23 CFR Part 634, Federal Highway Administration, DOT.

17.17.03 POLICY

Roadway obstructions, malfunctioning traffic control devices, special events, and other occurrences often restrict the normal flow of traffic. In such cases it may be necessary to institute temporary measures to provide for the safety of emergency personnel, possible victims, and the general public; the expedient and efficient management of a scene; and the maintenance and/or restoration of an unobstructed flow of traffic. It is therefore the policy of the Florida Highway Patrol to, when necessary, provide for the orderly flow of traffic by assisting local authorities in planning for special events, make recommendations to correct conditions that restrict the flow of traffic, and provide for manual traffic direction when circumstances dictate.

17.17.04 OBJECTIVES

To ensure the smooth flow of traffic in and around areas of obstructed or unusually congested roadways.

17.17.05 PROCEDURES

A. TRAFFIC DIRECTION OR CONTROL

1. Traffic direction or control may be required in various situations including, but not limited to:
 - a. Traffic crash scenes.
 - b. Fire scenes.

- c. Adverse weather conditions.
 - d. Damaged or malfunctioning traffic control devices.
 - e. Special events.
 - f. Man-made or natural disasters.
 - g. Other events that adversely affect the orderly flow of traffic.
2. Upon the discovery or notification of conditions necessitating manual traffic direction or control, a member will:
 - a. Notify the Regional Communications Center and request assistance if needed.
 - b. Ensure that appropriate agencies, utilities or officials are notified.
 - c. Provide traffic direction or control.
 - d. Take other action appropriate to restore the normal, orderly flow of traffic.
 3. Emergency equipment on patrol cars, traffic cones, fusees, and other temporary traffic control devices may be used in situations requiring the manual direction or control of traffic. The member in charge of the scene will direct the placement and removal of such signs or devices. The high visibility traffic vest will be worn at **ALL** times members are involved in directing traffic, investigating crashes, and handling lane closures, obstructed roadways, and disasters on the roadway.
 4. Before initiating traffic direction or control, members should consider such variables as traffic volume and speed, the number of pedestrians present, anticipated duration of the congestion period, and the presence or absence of traffic control devices. Manual traffic control should not be used when the use of a traffic control device will alleviate the problem.
 5. Bystanders and their vehicles should not be allowed to interfere with emergency operations or the flow of traffic.
 6. Emergency services personnel should be encouraged not to interfere with emergency operations or unnecessarily disrupt the flow of traffic with their vehicles or operations. When traffic is adversely affected, members will take reasonable steps to protect the scene. Conflicts with emergency services personnel should be reported to the appropriate supervisor who will relay the information to the district commander. If necessary, the district commander will meet and confer with the affected emergency services director to resolve such conflicts.

7. Manual operations of traffic signal lights and similar automated devices will normally be confined to emergency situations, major traffic congestion, special events, or specific sites where the Division has responsibility for the operation of those devices.

B. PREVENTION OF TRAFFIC PROBLEMS

1. Troop and District Commanders will cooperate and assist the Florida Department of Transportation and local agencies in identifying locations and times where traffic control may be needed.
2. For special events needing traffic direction or control, the member in charge will analyze traffic control needs, in conjunction with local authorities, including the following:
 - a. Ingress and egress of vehicles and pedestrians.
 - b. Parking.
 - c. Crowd control.
 - d. Public transportation.
 - e. Assignment of personnel to specific locations.
 - f. Relief of members.
 - g. Temporary traffic controls and parking restrictions.
 - h. Emergency vehicle access.
 - i. Communications.
3. Potentially hazardous parking situations which require corrective action by another agency should be reported to the district commander. District Commanders will verify the existence of the hazardous parking situations and ensure the proper agency is notified in an appropriate and timely manner.

C. PROCEDURES FOR THE MANUAL DIRECTION OF TRAFFIC

1. Members will comply with the following procedures when directing traffic:
 - a. Position themselves and any traffic control devices in a location that is clearly visible.
 - b. In the interest of trooper and public safety, members may not routinely park a Division vehicle upon a roadway simply to protect a disabled vehicle or other property. However, a member may park upon a roadway behind a disabled vehicle for the purpose of

placing flares or other warning devices, or to assist drivers or passengers to exit the vehicle. Members may also park on a roadway to protect victims or warn other motorists of roadway obstructions or hazards. Anytime a patrol vehicle is parked on a roadway, the emergency lights shall be activated. In any event, the patrol vehicle shall be removed as soon as practical from the roadway.

- c. Be attentive to traffic and maintain an erect, alert, and balanced stance.

2. Uniform signals should be used for traffic direction.

a. Stopping traffic flow.

- (1) Point and look directly at the driver that is to stop until eye contact is made.
- (2) Raise one hand with palm toward the driver until he stops. The member may point with his other hand to the exact location the driver is to stop.
- (3) When stopping vehicles on open, high speed highways, members should face the traffic to be stopped and extend both hands above their heads.

b. Starting and maintaining traffic flow.

- (1) Point at the driver being directed to start and make eye contact.
- (2) Rotate the hand up and over the chin bending the arm at the elbow.

c. Turns.

- (1) Turns will be allowed when they can be accomplished safely.
- (2) Turns will be directed by pointing at the driver until eye contact is made, then pointing in the direction of the turn.

d. Whistles may be used to supplement hand signals.

- (1) One long blast signals motorists to stop.
- (2) Two short blasts signal motorists to proceed.

- e. Flashlight signals during darkness.
 - (1) Due to reduced visibility members should be extra cautious when directing traffic at night. The emergency lights and fusees should be utilized to warn approaching motorists of the member's presence. Also, members should be aware that being back lit by bright lights may reduced the ability of approaching motorists to see them.
 - (2) The red flashlight baton should be used to enhance signals given with a flashlight.
 - (3) The beam of the flashlight may be aimed at and across the pavement in front of approaching cars as a signal to stop.
 - (4) The beam may be rapidly flashed in the direction of the approaching vehicle to get the driver's attention.
 - (5) The beam should be moved along the roadway in a small come-along arc to indicate the path the vehicle should proceed.
- f. Minor variations of the uniform signals used for traffic direction may be made to facilitate the flow of traffic in unusual situations.

D. TRAFFIC CONTROL BY PRIVATE CITIZENS

- 1. In exigent circumstances members may allow or request responsible citizens to provide assistance with traffic direction or control to safeguard lives or property.
- 2. Members who allow or request assistance from private citizens should take necessary reasonable measures to protect the safety of such citizens.